DATANEWS

'PROFESSIONAL DATACARE - COMPUTING FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE'

ISSUE 5 - JULY 1992

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PROFESSIONAL DATACARE ORGANISATION

Quality FIRST

There is only one recognised Quality Assurance qualification an organisation can achieve which is universally recognised. BS5750 is such a qualification. The system once in place is A Quality Assurance Management system.

An essential part of the system is a Quality Assurance Manual which contains policy statements of every aspect of organisational operations. The Policy Manual is supported by a detailed Procedures Manual, which describes in detail all procedures required to fulfil the policy statements.

Finally a Documents Register is required. This contains all documents used in operating procedures and demonstrating that agreed procedures are followed.

The journey towards registration for BS5750 has begun. An Existing System Survey took place at the beginning of June. The survey report will highlight the priorities for action. The total process involved in preparing for registration is expected to take seventeen months, and an application for registration is planned for October 1993. There is an ongoing requirement to ensure that agreed procedures are followed. Organisations are subject to an audit after registration and the award can be revoked should the organisation be unable to demonstrate that agreed procedures are being followed.

The aim is to improve the quality of the services provided by Professional Datacare, and to demonstrate that there is commitment throughout the organisation to achieving consistently better quality.

PROFESSIONAL DATACARE & POWERtec

Professional Datacare and POWERtec have agreed to work together closely to provide a total integration between the Standard Payroll System (SPS), POWERtec Personnel and Manpower System, and Professional Datacare's Direct Input of Pay System (DIP).

This initiative has been undertaken in the belief that SPS has been significantly improved in recent times and may well provide the most attractive way forward for Health Care customers in the foreseeable future. Professional Datacare already support and process SPS and DIP for Health Care customers in the North Western Regional Health Authority and has recently proposed to provide these facilities to customers in the Mersey Region. The POWERtec Manpower and Personnel System is well known throughout Mersey as a highly functional system. It has been running live in Southport for approximately 18 months, has recently been purchased by the Chester Acute Unit and is currently under consideration by other customers within the Mersey Region.

In putting together a fully integrated solution, Professional Datacare and POWERtec will eliminate duplicate input of data between manpower/ personnel and payroll and will enable data from both sources to be drawn together through a single reporting tool as if all the data accessed were within a single database. Hence the key objectives of eliminating duplicate input of data and improving management information will be achieved without incurring the risks associated with replacing the payroll system. Each of the 3 components in question is already fully operational within the Health Service. Hence it is anticipated that the interfaces between them will be built quickly and that a fully functional solution will be available in the very near future.

It is already clear that there is no realistic alternative in the immediate future to SPS as a Health Service payroll system. The route which Professional Datacare and POWERtec are proposing does not necessarily preclude a later move to an independent payroll system should this emerge as a viable option in the future. What it does is to provide the benefits of full integration immediately without any associated risks. Integration will be achieved by moving data physically between POWERtec, DIP and SPS. All manpower and personnel data needed for analysis and reporting purposes will be transferred back into POWERtec's system for manipulation via the POWERtec report writer.

CONTINUED REFURBISHMENT

Refurbishment of the working environment of Professional Datacare is soon to recommence. Part of the scheduled improvements will include moving the Data Control office to the rear of the premises to provide much needed extra space to cater for the anticipated increase in workload from Mersey Regional Health Authority. A collection/despatch point at the rear of the building is also to form part of the alterations. Other plans include better and larger accommodation for the Technical Services Group and a new Administration Office to handle the projected increase in workload.

More detail will be provided in the next issue of DATANEWS.

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New Data on PRIDE

Professional Datacare's PRIDE management information system was set up in 1989 to allow DHA users fast and easy access to data on the Regional Mainframe using Ingres database software. The data can be interrogated using a set of query tools, including the industry standard Structured Query Language (SQL). The data can also be downloaded to the user's PC to be manipulated locally for reports, graphics and so on.

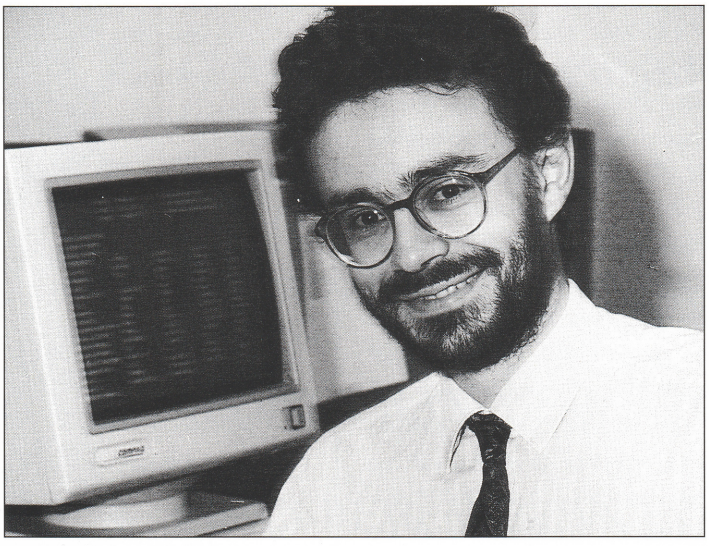
From the outset, the data has consisted of Korner Episodic System (KES) data. This gives details of all in-patient episodes in North Western Region for up to four financial years. Enhancements to the KES data have included making available online a copy of the many thousands of diagnosis and operation descriptions. This allows users to incorporate in reports the text describing in-patient operations and procedures, rather than a raw code.

Other additions to the PRIDE service consist of Contract Minimum Data Set (CMDS) data. This allows access to the list of all contracts held for a provider unit. and aggregated data on episodes occurring under a contract.

CMDS Waiting List data has also been added recently. This is designed to allow users a deeper level of analysis in the sensitive area of waiting list monitoring. This was not previously possible as a reliable source of Waiting List data did not exist. The data gives firstly a snapshot of the waiting list at a particular point in time, and secondly data on patients who have dropped off the list.

Forthcoming on the service is data on Outpatients. This will give access to all records for outpatient attendances. Again, this is designed to give managers the essential flexibility and reliability they require to meet their information needs as a basis for policy decisions now and into the future.

Other developments have concerned the Ingres software itself. In March 1992, the PRIDE service was upgraded from Version 5.0 to Version 6.4 of Ingres. This has doubled the number of concurrent sessions available, and makes it easier to query the database as there is no longer any time limit on retrievals. Also, Ingres Version 6 uses CAFS software on the mainframe; this gives faster response times on those queries which involve a scan through an entire database table.



ROGER SMITH - *Analyst/Programmer, Medical Systems*

The Interactive Child Health System

The "Interactive Child Health system (ICHS)" is the latest, ICL based, version of the "National Child Health System" the most widely used system of its kind in the United Kingdom. The System is produced, managed and maintained by the Welsh Health Common Service Agency (WHCSA) and is the market leader being used by more than 120 health authorities and TRUSTs in England and Wales. Such a large user base means that users benefit from both economics of scale and security of service. It has been developed to further meet the requirements of the users of the system.

The system comprises a Child Register and four modules for service delivery together with related on-line updating and interrogation facilities.

ICHS offers all the facilities one normally expects of an interactive on line system but also features the following additional benefits to users:

- The ability to easily transfer information between districts.
- Simple integration with other operational systems in the District in the context of Community Health Information System.
- The potential to use this system as a districts Central Index.
- A relationship between the ICHS and "Parent Held Records" is easily achieved.
- Access to the "Special Needs Register" can be made available to Local Authorities for use as a "Child Disability Register" and/or "Special Educational Needs Register".
- Simplified means of accessing the "Statistical Package" to ease the creation and extraction of complicated statistical results.
- The ability to submit, and/or interrogate, information via terminals.

On June 1st 1992 Salford became this Regions pilot district for the ICHS. WHCSA provided the initial training for the Salford team who have been particularly impressed with the user friendly menus and screen based help facilities.

The system also offers:

- *Immediate validation and updating of records.*
- *More local control of such functions as the timing of printing and the requests for statistical information.*
- *A much improved security procedure. Access to the system is controlled by the input of both the User's initials and a password.*
- *Access can also be limited to an individual General Practitioner, G.P. Practice, Health Visitor, Treatment Centre, Examination Centre or School.*
- *Highly developed query facilities that allow users to access their information i.e. you can define your own queries when, and if, you need them.*
- *Links are also provided to other systems such as St. Mary's Maternity, COSS, Comcare and the FHSA computer system.*

FOCUS ... FOCUS ... FOCUS

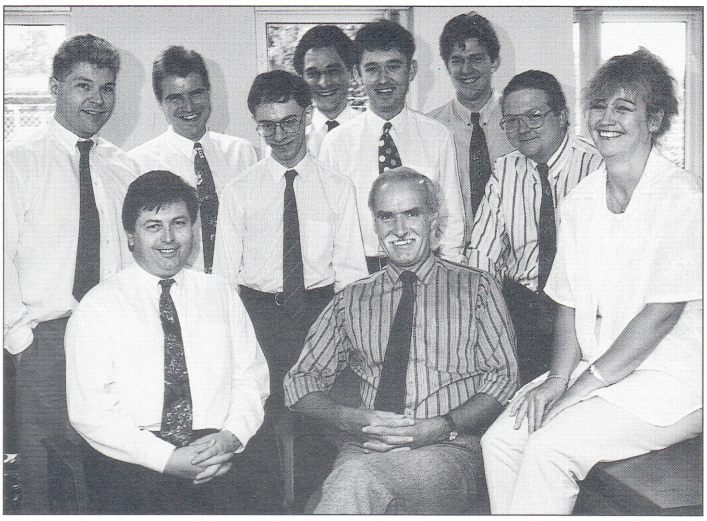
SPS Group - *The UK Team!*

As Europe's largest employer, the NHS needs a good payroll system to cope with the large number of staff and complex Whitley (and more recently non-Whitley) conditions of pay. The Standard Payroll System (SPS) is now used to pay more than a million staff each month in over 150 Districts and Trusts in the 12 Regions of the NHS. The awesome responsibility for keeping all this running smoothly falls to the 15 members of the SPS team at Professional Datacare.

Governments change Tax and National Insurance regulations; Whitley Councils dream up ever more complicated conditions of service; and Pay Office and Finance staff want more information for SPS. The team quietly and efficiently gets on with satisfying all these requirements, so that everyone from Chief Executive to part-time cleaner gets paid correctly, on time.

The latest developments are Local Pay and Conditions, so that Trusts in particular can have full facilities to pay locally-determined rates and conditions, rather than sticking to standard Whitley Council pay; and the Payroll Data Query (PDQ) system.

PDQ is an exciting new development which provides a powerful on-line, menu driven enquiry and reporting system into historical pay data. At the touch of a button, pay office and finance staff can examine historical earnings and costs data for the previous 2 years, using only a PC connected to the Regional network. An extensive library of standard queries and reports is available, or the easy-to-use report generator enables managers to tailor output to meet their own requirements exactly. In short, PDQ provides an effective mechanism for converting data into information - in this case pay data from SPS into information on earnings and costs no manager can afford to do without.



Bob Phillips, Project Leader, Standard Payroll Systems Group (seated right), together with other members of the Group.

The SPS team at Professional Datacare have collectively a vast amount of experience of computing (3 of the team have actually worked on the system since its inception in 1974!) and aims to continue to use their skills and knowledge to provide the NHS with the best payroll service for both managers and employees.

FOCUS ... FOCUS ... FOCUS

Pathology Project Management Project

The North Western Regional Health Authority have commissioned Professional Datacare to project manage the implementation of the Regional Pathology Roll Out Programme.

The Programme is designed to equip all Pathology Laboratories within the Region with modern computer systems which will facilitate the routine work and provide an interface to Casemix.

The Region have established, by pilot in North Manchester and Bolton, that the Telepath Pathology System provides a proven system in this specialised area, and in the next two years this system will be installed in a possible 12 sites. To provide sites with a further option, the Region are currently procuring a second supplier system which will be piloted at West Lancashire which if successful will be available for roll out in January 1993.

Professional Datacare are project managing the implementation of the Roll Out, and are responsible for ensuring that the programme is completed by April 1994 and within budget. The programme comprises of four phases, four systems being installed within each phase, each phase taking approximately 10 months to complete. To ensure that the programme is completed within the two years, the next phase is triggered after 4 months, with between 8 and 12 sites being affected at any one time.

At present work is underway at Salford, Withington, Stockport and Trafford to identify the hardware, communications and software required to support the Telepath system in each of those sites. Orders are scheduled to be placed before the end of June. The placement of the order is also the trigger for the commencing of the second phase of the Programme at Burnley, Preston, Withington and Lancaster.

The success of the Programme is largely dependant upon the commitment of the sites into which the system is being installed. Professional Datacare are working closely at each site supporting their project teams in planning and controlling their individual projects and offering systems analyst experience to identify and document their current working practices. They also liaise with the supplier to ensure that the correct system is being installed and that they can adequately meet their commitment across the Region.

Three Project Managers and a systems Analyst have been assigned to the project to ensure that the Programme is properly managed and controlled and that there is sufficient resource to assist the individual Project Teams in implementing the system at their respective sites.

Radiology Project Management Project

Don Crombie, Patient Administration Systems Group Manager (seated left), together with his team members

The Hospital Engineering Ltd. (HEL) Radiology system is being implemented throughout the North Western Regional Health Authority in 12 Districts.

The system is a Radiology Management system, designed in collaboration with a large district hospital. It has been enhanced in collaboration with the North Western Regional Health Authority from the experience of running the system on 2 pilot sites to meet departmental needs, and links to the SMS-UK PAS via the Front-End system. The system is also designed to:

- ***Follow the flow of patient data from the initial registration of a patient to film filing with ready access to that data.***
- ***Include film tracking using bar coded labels***
- ***Provide comprehensive management information***
- ***Run on a Siemens-Nixdorf UNIX platform***

In addition the system is:

- ***In a fully integrated modular format***
- ***Written in Informix 4GL***
- ***Used as a feeder system to Case-mix, Resource Management etc.***

Project Management is being provided by the Patient Administration Team from Professional Datacare in collaboration with local district management and a Regional Project Board.

As in any large project, there are many people from different disciplines and organisations involved related to the Radiology Project. This involved:

- ***Radiographers***
- ***Radiologists***
- ***Administration Support staff***
- ***Medical Record staff***
- ***Resource Management***
- ***Computer Service Managers***
- ***Finance Staff***
- ***District Works Departments***
- ***Professional Datacare Project Management***
- ***Technical Services and Business Analysts***
- ***HEL***
- ***Siemens-Nixdorf***
- ***BT***

As projects are the means by which organisations initiate significant change, it is essential a strategy of good management be adopted. The methodology used is PROMPT (Project Resource Organisation Management Planning Technique). PROMPT recommends that a series of Boards be set up to assign quality control responsibilities so enabling projects to proceed in an informed, structured and timely manner, to oversee:

- ***Project Co-ordination***
- ***Quality Assurance***
- ***Project Plan***

From experience gained, a more flexible approach has been adopted to make the structure more manageable and to reduce the amount of time staff need to prepare for and attend meetings.

The roles of the Project co-ordination Team and the Quality Assurance Board have been combined with the retention of a person who can provide an objective assessment of the Quality of the data and work.

The aims of this approach are to:

- ***get people involved***
- ***cut through local politics***
- ***assign responsibilities and accountability***
- ***ensure understanding of the project objectives***

The objectives are to:

- ***harmonise the interests of all parties involved***
- ***get the right people involved***
- ***to deliver a quality product***
  - *on time*
  - *within budget*
  - *meet the needs of end users*

A key element in the process is the production of the Project Plan, which is broken down into:

- ***Stages***
  - *controllable elapsed time*
  - *major short-term milestones*
  - *help maintain momentum and commitment*
- ***End Products***
  - *many different activities make up an end product*
  - *each activity has an end product*
  - *process of creating an end product will involve work*

The plan is in 3 stages:

- ***Preparatory Work***
- ***Installation Work***
- ***Implementation***

The scope and organisational roles are:

- ***Scope - designed to determine:***
  - *Activities and end products*
  - *breakdown of task structure*
  - *dependencies*
- ***Estimate Resources:***
  - *skills*
  - *equipment*
  - *duration required*
- ***Schedule:***
  - *availability of resources*
  - *allocation of resources*
- ***Communicate:***
  - *the project plan in an understandable form*
- ***Organisational Roles***
  - **Structure** - *adopt PROMPT*
  - *Assumptions availability of key resources*
  - **Prerequisites** - *set up project on time appoint stage manager allocate resources*
  - **Project control** - *achieved through plan meetings monitoring*
  - **Risks** - Lateness - *activities done on time* Costs - *allocation of financial resources* Changes - *requests for customised software* Technical - *failure of key technical components* Quality - *of end products not acceptable*

An important part of the plan is the liaison between the Radiology stage manage administrative support staff and the Professional Datacare analyst in ascertaining what tasks people are doing and documenting their activities and procedures. These form the baselines in relation to the district wide procedures for the setting of install options, training, system documentation and the determination of the hardware and peripheral sizing.

Procedures are also written for the changeover downtime and help desk arrangement to support the users when the system goes live.

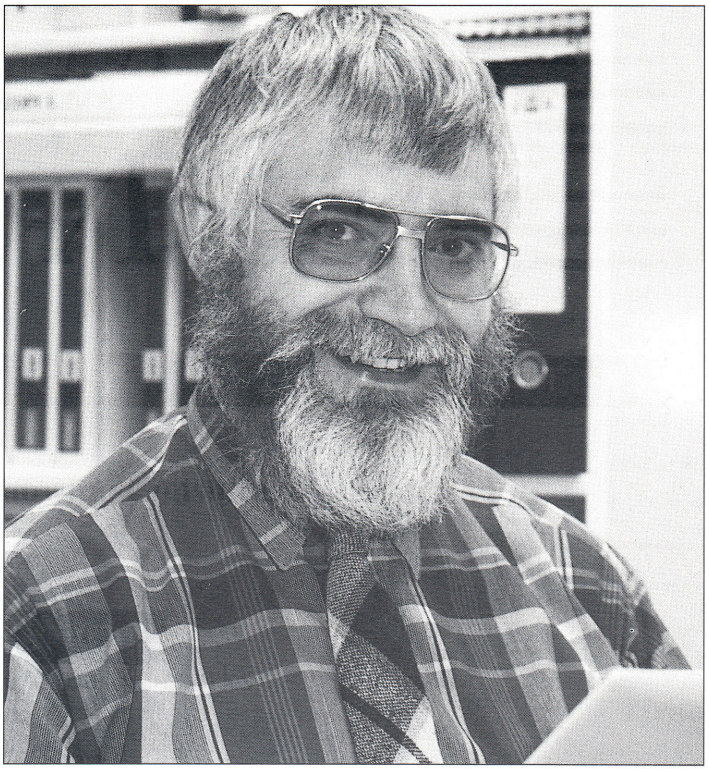
To date, three systems have been implemented, two of which have been converted from the SMS-UK system using their take-off software and three sites are in the process of being implemented.

For those with a Technical Bent!

Further details of these services and information on any technical issue is available from Ken Dearden.

Professional Datacare *Goes International*

The Technical Services Department at Professional Datacare has obtained an internationally unique TCP/IP Class B address from the registration authority in the United States. This will allow for the continuing support of the TCP/IP protocol family over the Regional Backbone network, once the Routers are upgraded to Brouters, later this year. The Class B address will enable Technical Services to allocate up to 255 sub network addresses, each of which can support up to 255 devices or services and customers can now be sure that the use of these addresses will not clash with any other device on the world-wide internet network. This move should not be considered an acceptable alternative to UK GOSIP but merely the support of interim protocols to provide additional functionality on the network until migration to full UK GOSIP standards is complete. The procurement guidelines for new systems are to be strengthened in the near future to ensure that purchases conform to the EEC Directive 87/95.



KEN DEARDEN, *Technical Services Department Manager*

Additional Technical Services

The Technical Services Department at Professional Datacare was pleased to be able to offer added value to customers contracting for DEC support. DEC VAX Health Checks have been added at no extra charge to the Service Level Agreement for the support of PAS processors and the response from customers has been very encouraging. There are also a number of new services available to customers which include:
Unix Support, PC and PC Network (Novell) Support.

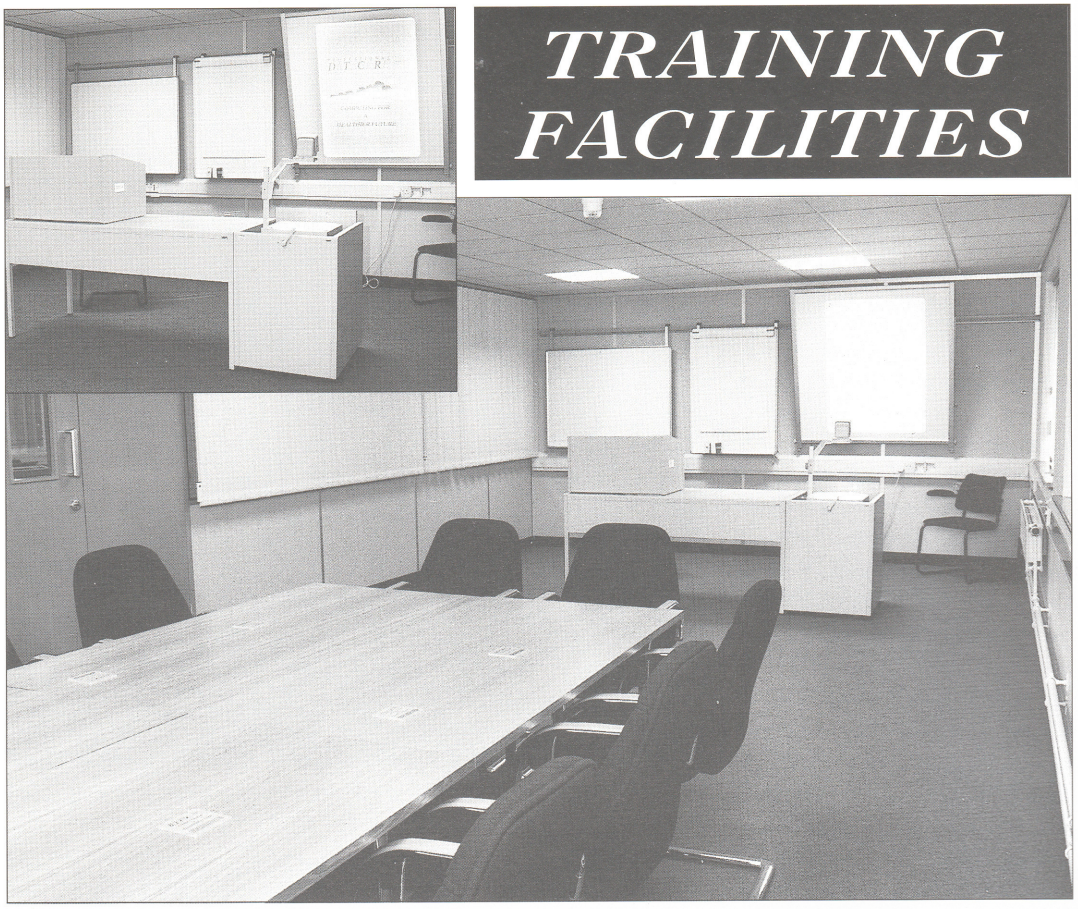
Expansion by Degrees?

Customers using PC Novell networks cannot help but have noticed a sudden increase in the number of available File Servers on the network, shown by the SLIST command. A recently implemented fibre optic link between the Regional Network and the University of Manchester Faculty of Medicine has expanded the range of services available to authorised users, mainly at the main teaching hospitals. The services available on this link are still very limited. This is because senior staff at both the University and Professional Datacare have taken stringent security precautions to prevent unauthorised access to the Regional network. The link currently only operates using Novell protocols and in such a way that, whilst file servers at the University are visible to the Region, none of the Regional file servers are visible to the University. It is therefore impossible for any University user to connect into the Regional network. There is no doubt that this link is too restrictive in this mode of operation. Professional Datacare will continue to work with the University to open up services on this link but will ensure that the mode of operation offers the maximum possible security to the Regional network. Nevertheless, customers are strongly advised to ensure that Novell systems are secured by restricting accesses based on physical MAC addresses.

GPs Prescribe ISDN2

Recent trials between GPs and North Manchester General Hospital have shown the potential for using ISDN2 to connect PCs at the practice to the district LAN for the electronic submission of referrals and the subsequent return of confirmation to the GP.
And the GPs involved in the trial, using equipment loaned by Network Designers Limited of Wetherby and links loaned by British Telecom, see this as the tip of the iceberg in respect of other services which could be made available using the two 64k bps digital dial-up links provided by ISDN2. Watch this space for future developments.

TRAINING FACILITIES



Main Board Room with inset photograph of Training Facilities

The photographs above show the main Board Room of Professional Datacare, and it can be seen that the installation of training equipment has now been completed. In addition to conference facilities, white board and projection equipment are available, together with a lecturers table and lectern. For those who want to demonstrate PC equipment via overhead projector, a Projection Panel, or data show, is also available.

In the coming months it's planned to kit out the seminar room with PCs to enable full network training. Both of these rooms are available for Regional customer training facilities at a cost of £50.00 per half day or £100.00 per full day booking. Costs are fully inclusive of all equipment and mid morning/ mid afternoon refreshments. If required, buffet lunches can also be arranged - prices available on application.

A service is also offered for production of high quality overhead visual training aids - prices available on application.

Interested?

If so, contact John Stanfield or Stuart Edwards on

061-773-9211

to make your reservation.

THE NWRHA PERSONNEL EXECUTIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM

The central challenge of the current NHS reforms is the provision of an effective, efficient and high quality health service for patients and their families. The management of resources (people, money, estate) is key to the success of these changes. Within the personnel function this has meant personnel specialists having increasingly to focus on maximising the effectiveness and efficiency of the human resource. Effective human resource management requires information systems that can collate and present the necessary information to those who will be managing the service, in a format most suitable for them.

The Region's Integrated Personnel System (IPS) stores hundreds of data fields on each member of staff using a structured coding system. A major problem with IPS and computerised information systems in general is that they are data-driven - large amounts of data, but little that is accessible and useful for senior managers.

In order to address this problem a personnel based Executive Information System (EIS) has been developed through a project team led by the Regional Personnel Department with technical support from Professional Datacare. Information is automatically downloaded from IPS to EIS which gives senior managers the ability to interpret and manipulate personnel information. The EIS enables managers to gain a better understanding of their organisation's human resource and focus on a series of critical personnel performance criteria e.g. staff costs and absence. The EIS is currently installed in seven sites across the region. Implementation in the next six sites will begin in the summer months.

Correction

TO ISSUE NUMBER 4

In the article -

The IPS team Key to Success! featured in Issue 4 of Datanews, we inadvertently stated that *"Every day up to 3,500 users can access IPS and together manipulate in excess of 70,000 pieces of information"*. This should of course, have read *".....in excess of 70,000,000 pieces of information"*. Our apologies to the IPS team for misrepresenting their achievements by such a large margin.

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of PAS

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PAUL MESKELL
of Medical Systems

•

PETER GRIFFITHS
Systems Development Manager

P·R·O·F·E·S·S·I·O·N·A·L DATACARE

A trading department of the NWRHA

CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Professional Datacare offers the following Consultancy services to its many customers

1 COMMUNICATION CONSULTANCY

- both Local Area Networks and Wide Area Networks

* *Network strategy*
* *Network design*
* *Installation & configuration covering both LAN & WAN*

2 TECHNICAL EVALUATION

Technical Evaluation of operational requirements & suppliers responses in respect of:

* *Hardware configurations*
* *Operating system environments*
* *Data communications networking*
* *Conformance to UK GOSIP & compliance with EEC directive 87/95*

3 OPERATING SYSTEM OPTIMISATION & SUPPORT

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* *VMS*
* *PIC/UNIX*
* *MSDOS*
* *NOVELL*

4 TECHNICAL ORGANISATION REVIEWS

Technical Organisation Reviews and assessments, covering:

* *Procedures*
* *Documentation*
* *Staffing Levels*

5 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Facilities Management Consultancy Services - no task considered as too small, no job too large!

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:

JOHN STANFIELD ON 061 773 9211 Extension 230

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- OPEN SYSTEM WITH UNIX
- SSADM
- 4th GENERATION DEVELOPMENT
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- FEASIBILITY STUDIES
- PREPARATION OF OPERATION REQUIREMENTS
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT OF MAJOR CAPITAL PROGRAMS
- PROCUREMENT ADVICE